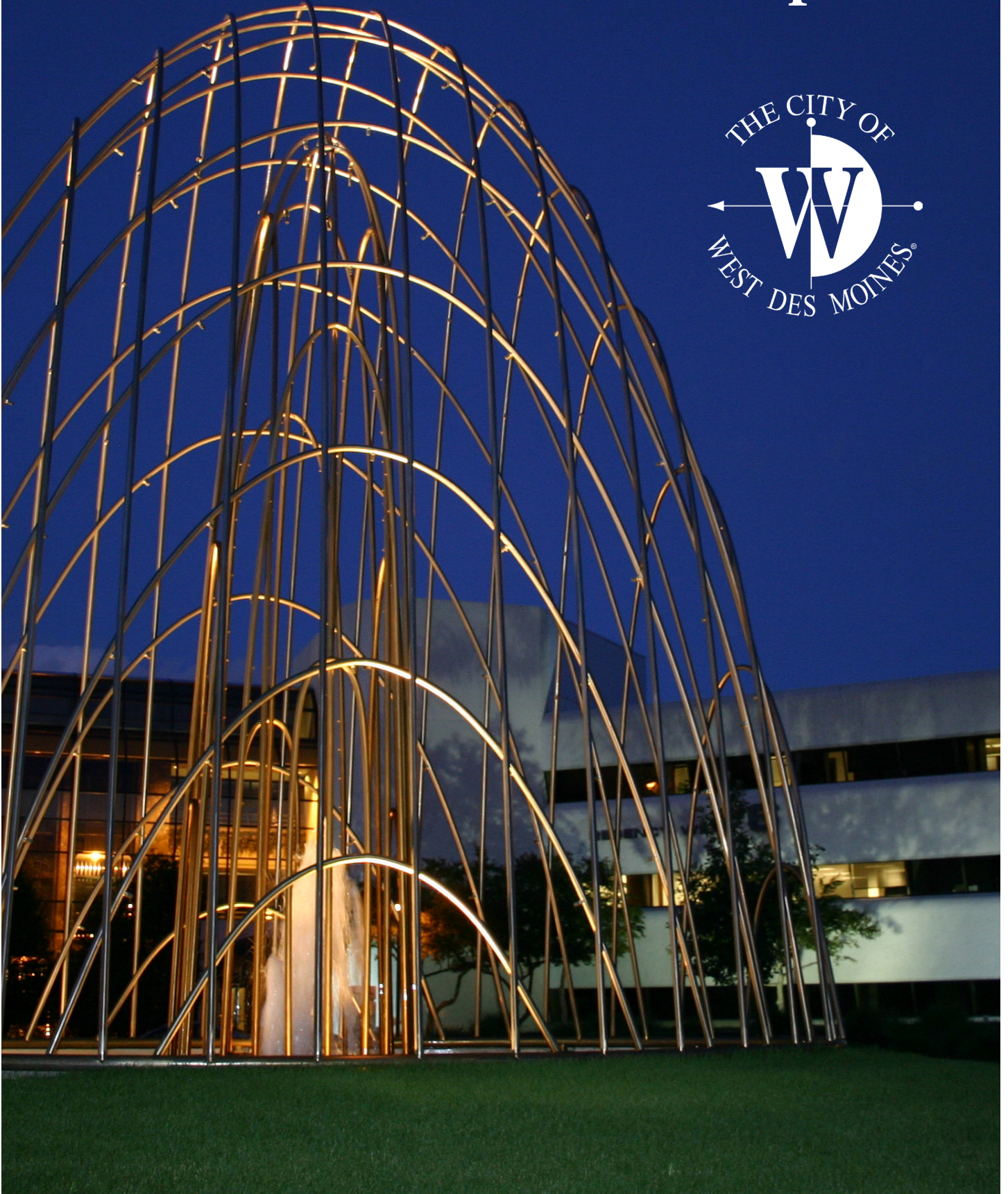


# City of West Des Moines 2016 Business Climate Report







Population: 64,113

Daytime Population: 134,795

Unemployment Rate: 3.7%

Sources: 2015 - 2016 West Des Moines  
Development Retrospective  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# The Executive Call Program

For 20 years, the City of West Des Moines has participated in the Executive Call Program along with the Greater Des Moines Partnership and West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. The primary tool of the program is a confidential survey of business owners and executives used to identify and promote strengths of running a business in West Des Moines. The survey also helps define and alleviate any weaknesses of operating a business in West Des Moines. Survey results are aggregated into a complete data set that is used to create this annual publication.

Additionally, the program serves the purpose of building a friendly, professional and beneficial rapport among the business community, City of West Des Moines, West Des Moines Chamber and the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

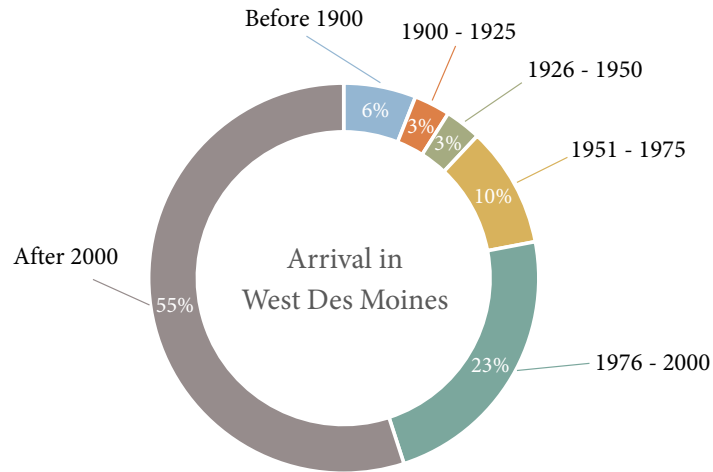
In 2016, 65 businesses participated in the Executive Call Program. This sample is representative of all the key industries in West Des Moines, which includes large, small, new, and long-established businesses.

We would like to extend our appreciation to those businesses and thank them for volunteering their time to participate in the Executive Call Program. A list of all 65 participating businesses is found on page 8 of this document.

If you have any questions about the Executive Call Program, or if your business would like to participate, please call the City of West Des Moines Department of Community & Economic Development at (515) 273-0770.

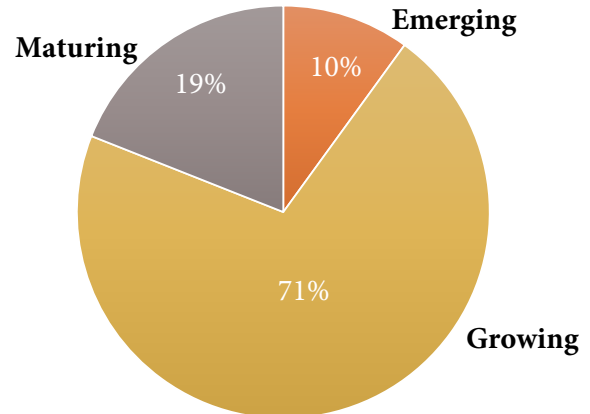


# Executive Call Program Company Profiles



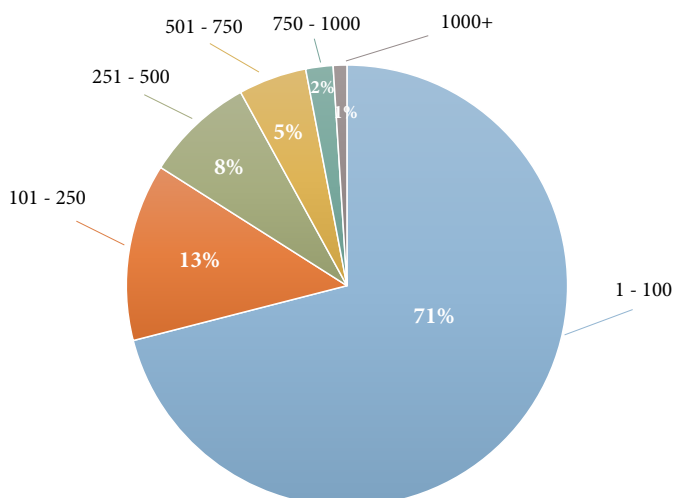
West Des Moines is known for having long and beneficial relationships with our resident businesses. Forty-five percent of responding businesses have been in operation for at least 16 years. Twenty-three percent of responding businesses have been running for over 41 years.

## Business Life Cycle



Large businesses with 500 or more employees accounted for 8% of those surveyed.

## Number of Employees



# West Des Moines Businesses Thrive on Innovation

One important reason for the growth and success of West Des Moines' business community is the presence of innovation and ingenuity. Eighty-three percent of businesses say they've introduced new products or services in the past five years.

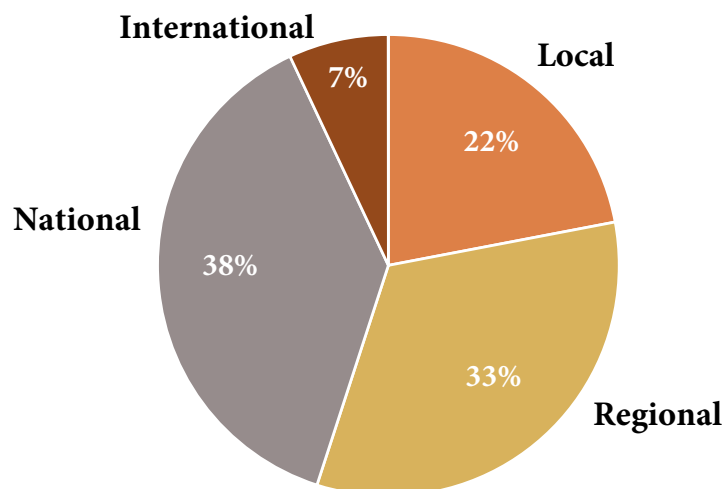
Additionally, our businesses have the foresight to look toward the future and recognize the trends of tomorrow. Seventy-eight percent of responding businesses plan to introduce new products or services in the next 24 months.

Plus, 66% of businesses intend to expand in the next three years. Ninety-six percent of businesses don't believe there are any barriers to business growth in West Des Moines. Seventy-nine percent of businesses would consider West Des Moines as a place to expand operations.

When asked to rate some of the community's strengths, businesses most often answered by praising West Des Moines' location, positive business climate, strong community leadership, and quality community services. Some noted areas of improvement needed in the community include land availability or cost, perceived poor infrastructure, and a lack of skilled laborers.

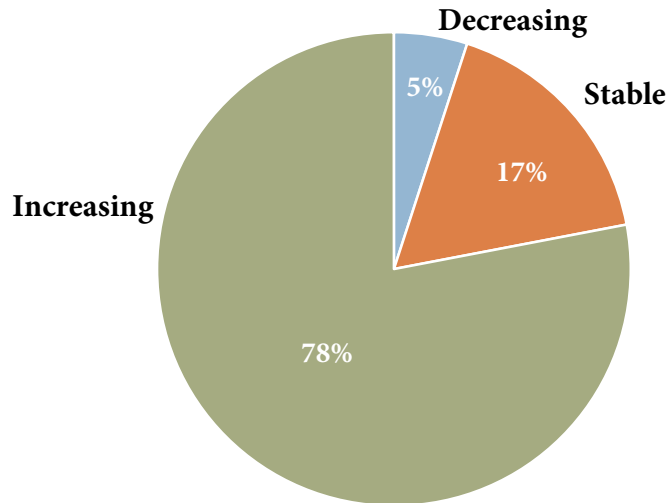
As our businesses continue to expand, many have an eye on a larger marketplace for their goods and services. Only 22% of respondents say they focus mainly on local business.

Primary Business Market



# West Des Moines Businesses are Competitive

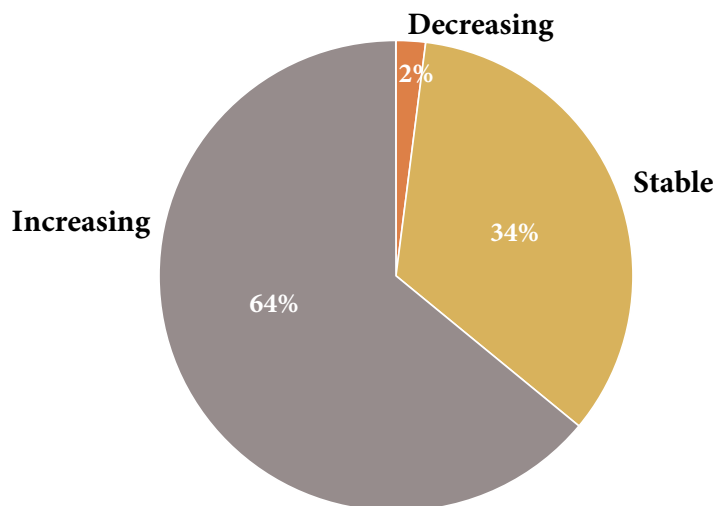
Company Sales Trend



With 78% of respondents reporting increased sales in 2016, this relates to a sign of prosperity in the marketplace and a competitive edge held by West Des Moines businesses.

Along with additional sales revenue, nearly two-thirds of businesses say their product's market share is increasing. Only 2% of local businesses reported losing market share in 2016.

Market Share of Key Products & Services





# Workforce Traits

In addition to measuring the growth and success of West Des Moines' business climate, the Executive Call Program has companies rank the availability, quality, stability and productivity of the regional workforce on a scale of 1 through 7, with one being the lowest and seven being the highest.

## **Workforce Availability**

With a low metro unemployment rate of 2.9%<sup>1</sup>, workforce availability is by far the lowest ranking workforce trait. Responding companies ranked workforce availability with an average score of 4.48. Plus, 77% of businesses reported having trouble recruiting certain positions. Difficulty recruiting scientific or technical-related positions, and skilled and unskilled labor accounted for 66% of all recruitment challenges in 2016. The workforce availability rating of 4.48 in West Des Moines is an improvement over the statewide average of 3.84.

## **Workforce Quality**

The businesses in West Des Moines ranked workforce quality at an average of 5.37. To further increase the quality of the local labor force, 65% of businesses say they have made an increased investment in employee training. No businesses report decreasing employee training. Our workforce quality rating is substantially higher than the statewide average of 4.69.

## **Workforce Stability**

The businesses in West Des Moines ranked workforce stability at an average of 5.48. Only five businesses rated workforce stability with a score of 3.0 or lower. Our total is greater than the state average rating of 5.14.

## **Workforce Productivity**

Workforce productivity is the highest-rated trait in West Des Moines with a score of 6.04. Over 80% of respondents rated productivity with a rating of 6.0 or higher, and only one measured productivity with a 4.0 or lower. Our workforce productivity score is once again greater than the statewide average of 5.60.

<sup>1</sup>United States Bureau of Labor. (2016). Economy at a Glance.

# Utility Service & Quality

Quality utility infrastructure serves as the foundation of any community in providing an affordable and reliable place to live and do business. Once again businesses used the 1 through 7 scale to rate their satisfaction with local utility services:

Utility	2015 Score	2016 Score	Difference
Water	6.17	6.26	<b>+.09</b>
Sewer	6.29	6.27	<b>-.02</b>
Natural Gas	6.31	6.29	<b>-.02</b>
Electricity	6.39	6.31	<b>-.08</b>
Telecom (Voice)	5.48	6.02	<b>+.54</b>
Cellular	6.22	6.20	<b>-.02</b>
Internet Access	5.55	5.58	<b>+.03</b>
Internet Speed	5.60	4.00	<b>-1.60</b>

Overall, many of the utility scores remained nearly identical from 2015 to 2016. The only significant increase in score was in the telecom (voice) category, and the only significant decrease was in Internet speed.



# Community Service Satisfaction

Businesses were asked to rank services offered in the community and greater metro area on a scale of 1 through 7:

Service	2015 Score	2016 Score	Difference
Police Protection	6.61	6.66	<b>+.05</b>
Fire Protection	6.64	6.83	<b>+.19</b>
Ambulance	6.66	6.83	<b>+.17</b>
Healthcare Services	6.61	6.56	<b>-.05</b>
Childcare	5.73	6.06	<b>+.33</b>
Schools (K-12)	6.46	6.50	<b>+.04</b>
Community College	6.41	6.47	<b>+.06</b>
Regional Universities	6.44	6.43	<b>-.01</b>
Public Transportation	4.83	4.88	<b>+.05</b>
Traffic Control	5.70	6.15	<b>+.45</b>
Local Streets and Roads	5.89	6.36	<b>+.47</b>
State and Federal Highways	5.81	6.34	<b>+.53</b>
Airline Passenger Service	5.19	5.47	<b>+.28</b>
Property Tax Assessment	5.11	5.85	<b>+.74</b>
Zoning Changes and Permits	5.96	6.20	<b>+.24</b>
Regulatory Enforcement	5.93	6.35	<b>+.42</b>

As the table shows, there were only two slight decreases in scores from last year. Significant improvements occurred in childcare services, traffic control, local streets and road conditions, state and federal highways, airline passenger service, fair and equitable property tax assessment, zoning changes and permits, and regulatory enforcement.

# Thank You!

The City of West Des Moines would like to extend another thank you to the 65 businesses who volunteered their time and resources in 2016 to participate in the Executive Call Program. The information gathered from their surveys is a crucial part of the City's efforts to create local employment and to maintain and expand our tax base.

## **ADP**

**Alexander Open Systems**

**All-State Industries Inc.**

**Amanda the Panda**

**American Equity Investment Life Insurance Co.**

**Amerigroup**

**Athene**

**Bartlett & West**

**Bing Bang**

**Black Iops**

**Blue Compass Interactive**

**Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa**

**Briggs Corporation**

**Brooks Lodden, P.C.**

**BSB Design**

**CBRE/Hubbell Commercial**

**China Iowa Group**

**Chow's Gymnastics & Dance Institute**

**Coldwell Banker**

**Conference Event Management**

**Cooper Crawford & Associates, L.L.C.**

**Current R/E Renewable Efficiencies**

**EquiTrust Life Insurance Company**

**Events Center West**

**Exelon Generation - Wind & Solar**

**Farmers Mutual Hail**

**FBL Financial Group**

**Fiserv**

**Forterra Pipe & Precut**

**Garland & Associates**

**General Dynamics Information Technology**

**Glen Oaks Country Club**

**Heartland Co-op**

**Homesteaders Life Co.**

**Huber, Book, Lanz, McConkey & Finch**

**Hy-Vee**

**Iowa Student Loan**

**ITA Group, Inc.**

**JE Dunn Construction**

**Kforce, Inc.**

**KCL Engineering**

**Keffer Overton Associates Inc. Architects**

**Kidder Benefits Consultants, Inc.**

**Krist Insurance Services**

**Lendtrade**

**Liability Pro Insurance Advisors**

**Link Associates**

**Marketing Kinetics**

**Mass Mutual Financial Group**

**Microsoft**

**Mid-America Group**

**Net-Integrated Consulting (NIC)**

**New York Life Insurance Company**

**Palmer Group**

**Primerica**

**Private Asset Advisory Group**

**River Glen Wealth Counselors**

**Rockway Wealth Partners**

**Securitas Security Services USA, Inc.**

**Shift Interactive**

**Spotlight Innovation**

**State Public Policy Group**

**Statistics & Control, Inc.**

**Surgery Center of Des Moines**

**West Des Moines Business Incubator**



## **Mayor & City Council**

Mayor: Steven K. Gaer

Councilmember - 1st Ward: Kevin Trevillyan

Councilmember - 2nd Ward: John Mickelson

Councilmember - 3rd Ward: Russ Trimble

Councilmember - At Large: Rick Messerschmidt

Councilmember - At Large: Jim Sandager

## **City Manager's Office**

City Manager: Tom Hadden

Deputy City Manager: Jamie Letzring

**[www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov)**  
**(515) 222-3600**





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**Community & Economic Development**  
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**West Des Moines, Iowa 50265-0320**  
**(515) 273-0770**  
**[www.wdm.iowa.gov/CED](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov/CED)**